ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 8/4/65	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.
ED000391	7143	N.A.

4. AUTHOR(S):
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5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
A Plan to Improve Faculty-Student Communication

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
N.A.

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. Sacramento State College
ST Sacramento, California
CITY, STATE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
Sacramento State College

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	59	5

TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR
report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12):

teacher education Y-20			
professional education P-20	programs P-22		
student-teacher relations Y-15A	students Y-15		

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Proposed program for organizing student and faculty committees to serve as liaison between education division and student-teachers. Presents background of program, responsibilities and functions of two committees, and steps in initiating plan.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OR PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

IV - 9

SACRAMENTO STATE COLLEGE
Division of Teacher Education
January 24, 1959

Merle W. Vance, CSTA
Sponsor.

A PLAN TO IMPROVE FACULTY-STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Student reaction to the program of Teacher Education at Sacramento State College has influenced changes in course sequence, course content, and instruction. Student opinion is important to the continued improvement of teacher education and we should continue to solicit this opinion in developing and maintaining the most effective program possible.

In recognizing and accepting student opinion as important, and rather than leave such vital communication to chance as we do at present, it is proposed that a cooperative program be developed in which students have an integral part in working closely with the Education Division on problems in which such participation is desirable. This would provide a constant and objective source of information relative to Teacher Education. It might also serve to give students an increased feeling of loyalty and appreciation of the problems in this Division.

One of the chief concerns in developing a program involving student-faculty cooperation is the degree to which students are capable of functioning on a high professional level. It is proposed that a selected group of students from the College CSTA chapter be considered as having this potential and would be capable of working in a professional manner with the Division in such a program. Provision has already been made for each CSTA chapter to form a committee to work on Teacher Education and Professional Standards. This committee is known as "TEPS". In the proposal to follow, "TEPS" would serve as liaison between the Education Division and students preparing to teach.

It is to be expected that the student group will be guided by the CSTA Code of Ethics. Pertinent items taken from this Code are listed below:

1. The student teacher acts only through accepted channels of communication and authority.
2. The student teacher recognizes that his conduct is a reflection upon the teacher education institution that he represents.

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3. The student approaches his own learning situation with a positive attitude.
4. The student teacher upholds the standards of the institution in his professional conduct.
5. The student teacher appreciates and makes constructive use of the assistance of the college in helping him adjust to professional practice.
6. The student teacher shows pride in and considers himself a member of the profession.
7. The student acts according to established ethics in all matters.

Background of the proposed program.

The "TEPS" Committee of the C.T.A. was first brought to my attention at the Lake Tahoe Conference in August, 1957. This relatively new Committee had been set up in the CTA and the CSTA chapters in order to establish and maintain high professional standards, and also to encourage each chapter to develop some controls and to establish disciplinary measures through the actions of the Chapter Committee.

During the recent CSTA convention in Los Angeles, I had the opportunity of meeting with the "TEPS" discussion group. The students were concerned about the criticism directed at teacher education, about student-faculty relationships and understandings, and about the relationship between the Education Division and the "Subject-matter Divisions" in the various colleges and universities.

This discussion group reacted very favorably to the suggestion that a "TEPS" Committee might work closely with the Education Divisions and Departments in the colleges and universities; also, that such a committee might defend as well as advance sound educational doctrine against irresponsible criticism. A morning session was devoted to the idea of TEPS working closely with educators.

As a result of the discussions, the following questions were brought before the General Assembly:

1. How can TEPS Committees improve student-faculty communications?
2. How can TEPS Committees encourage local chapters to avoid a negative approach in dealing with faculty members?
3. How can we improve student-faculty communication on professional problems?

These questions are to be discussed further at the Asilomar Conference in April of this year. The officers and delegates of the SSC Chapter of CSTA present at this Conference have shown an interest in setting up a TEPS Committee. The functions of this Committee might serve to improve student-faculty communications in the following proposed plan. Its success could encourage other schools to improve relationships between faculty members and students.

THE PLAN:

The campus CSTA Chapter will organize a "TEPS" Committee. Members of the Education Division will also form a committee to be considered as the Faculty "TEPS" group. These two committees, representing the students and faculty, will work together for the purpose of improving (1) Student-faculty relationships and communication (2) orientation of students to the teacher education program, and (3) advisement and counsel of teacher education students.

The two representative committees will meet for the purpose of analyzing and evaluating:

1. Problems relating to student opinion of teacher education.
2. Problems relating to proposed changes in the teacher education program.
3. Means of orienting students to the objectives of the teacher education program.
4. Problems of encouraging all students to channel opinions and reactions to the Student TEPS Committee.
5. Problems relating to advisement and counsel of students with problems needing immediate attention.
6. Means of generally improving communication and understanding between the Education Division and other Divisions.

Other responsibilities of the Student TEPS Committee:

1. Develop an orientation program for students new to teacher education.
2. Develop a program to re-orient students who have failed to thoroughly understand the program of Teacher Education.
3. Sponsor "evaluation" meetings whereby individual students may be encouraged to express critical comments (or positive) and/or to bring out basic issues affecting the morale of students preparing for teaching.

Other responsibilities of the Faculty TEPS Committee:

1. Sponsor seminar sessions of student TEPS members and other faculty members for the purpose of clarifying basic issues of each phase of the elementary and secondary program.
2. Develop means of eliciting student opinion that is objective.
3. Develop means of using student opinion and suggestions for planning changes in the teacher education program.

It is important that both Committees operate on the highest professional and ethical level. This program should help channel comments from students to their peer group who may handle the issues brought forth in a professional manner. It is also hoped that opinions from many more students will be forthcoming than at present. As the program progresses, improved communication and understanding should result

in a cooperative, positive, and constructive relationship between the faculty in Teacher Education and the students preparing to teach.

SOME SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS OF THE TWO COMMITTEES

Student TEPS Committee

1. Serve as a liaison group between students in Teacher Education and the Education faculty.

2. Encourage students to bring criticism and other reactions of the Teacher Education Program to this Committee.
   a. Weigh and evaluate student reactions and opinions.
   b. Become familiar with all aspects of the education program (Purposes, goals, methods of instruction, content, and scope and sequence). These understandings will provide the basis for dealing intelligently with problems coming before the attention of the Committee.

3. Help orient students to the teacher education program for students new to Teacher Education.
   a. Promote professional topics for CSTA meetings.
   b. Sponsor small-group discussion groups. Invite Teacher Education members to participate.

4. Help evaluate the present program and proposed changes.

5. Attend some Education Division open meetings.
   a. Present a panel of members on some discussion important to the Division as a whole.

6. Accept the objectives of the faculty representing each area in the elementary and secondary programs as the basis for explaining the programs to students.

Faculty TEPS Committee

1. Work closely with the Student TEPS Committee. Encourage participation of other students and faculty with this committee.

2. Encourage students and advisers to channel communications to the Student TEPS Committee.
   a. Help the Student TEPS weigh and evaluate issues in their proper light; help instill objectivity and critical thinking.
   b. Promote meetings with the Student TEPS Committee to explain and discuss the basic issues in our program of teacher education. Invite all members of the Division to participate in this orientation process. Consider all opinions and issues as a means of improving our teacher education program.
   c. Consider important all issues brought to this Committee's attention. Bring issues to the attention of other faculty as a positive, constructive measure.

3. Help student CSTA Committee set up an orientation program.
   a. Help develop key topics.
   b. Encourage controversial topics relating to teacher education; the better to meet such criticism squarely.

4. Bring to the attention of the Student Committee aspects of the program with which we are concerned.

5. Invite the Student TEPS Committee to an open meeting of the Division.
   a. Help the Student Committee develop a discussion important to the Division as a whole.

6. Carry out an intensive evaluation program to determine the consistency of objectives, goals, etc. for each area in the elementary and secondary programs.

Steps in Presenting and Initiating the Plan:

1. This plan will be presented to the Practicum Committee.
2. After acceptance by this committee, it will be presented to the Education Division.
3. If acceptable to the Education Division, this plan will be presented to the Executive Committee of the CSTA for formation of a Student TEPS Committee.
4. Members of the "Practicum Committee" will form the nucleus of an affiliated CTS-sponsored TEPS Committee. Members from Secondary Education will become members.
5. Both the Student TEPS and the Faculty TEPS Committees will meet to form the course of action, develop guidelines, and stress the professional and ethical approach to be used.

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